

~~POL-510-11-12~~ (draft)

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[REDACTED]

The rural Treasury Police are putting more of their force on horseback to increase their efficiency. One newspaper stated that twelve National Policemen had been dismissed in recent weeks after citizens had complained that they had demanded "mordidas", "the little bites" of bribery that normally supplement police salaries.

3. Minister of Government Jorge ARENALES Catalan has spoken of raising compensation for police officers. In a press interview, Arenales expressed hard-headed realism when he declared that those who thought crime would end on July 1 were mistaken. He stated that President Arana will need time to diminish violence in the nation. Arenales also promised that the new government would hew closely to the law in combatting crime. In a related development, the Congress passed a new penal code which upped the penalties for a number of crimes (A-171). A reform of the penal procedural system primarily aimed at bringing criminals to trial more rapidly will shortly be introduced.

4. The murder of the newly installed mayor of Zacapa, Marco Tulio ALDANA Sanchez, and a woman friend was probably the most significant act of political terrorism of the month, not so much in itself, but rather in the reaction it prompted from the President. Aldana was a close friend and probable counter-terror compatriot of Oliverio CASTANEDA. His murder was simply another chapter in the blood-drenched history of Zacapa. Eight people have been arrested in relation to the crime, including a police official in Chimaltenango and his two sons. The chief of the Judicial police was dispatched to Zacapa to take charge of the investigation and Arana personally visited the families of the victims.

[REDACTED]

Castaneda [REDACTED] left the country. (GUATEMALA A-169). After traveling for a few weeks in Central America, he returned to Guatemala in the last days of the month. He has recently been granted permission by the Congress not to attend that body for two months and a high MIN official has told an Embassy officer that he expects Castaneda to leave the country again in the near future.

5. Castaneda's absence has been commented upon by the press and at least one article tied his sudden departure to the murder of Hugo RODRIGUEZ Vasquez on July 3. Rodriguez was a known leftist in the early 1960's [REDACTED] who seems to have dropped out of politics until he recently reemerged as an Arana supporter in Chiquimula. An unconfirmed rumor holds that Castaneda or his followers did not place much faith in

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Rodriguez' conversion and eliminated him to prevent the development of closer ties between him and Arana. It was this murder, says the rumor, rather than the Zacapa affair, that made it prudent for Castaneda to leave the country.

6. On July 9 Owen Smith, a British-born Guatemalan citizen with extensive holdings in coffee and cattle, was kidnapped. He was released seventeen days later. [redacted] paid an estimated \$75,000 for his [redacted]. In conversation with an Embassy officer a member of his family revealed that his captors had been young, neatly dressed, polite and dedicated revolutionaries who had treated him well. His place of confinement had been no more than a fifteen minute drive from Smith's Guatemala City residence.

7. The disappearance of Roberto OBREGON Morales [redacted] has received ample coverage in the press. Obregon was reportedly captured by the Salvadoran police as he was attempting to cross into Guatemala on July 7. The Association of University Students, various artistic groups and the Rector of the University of San Carlos have demanded information about his whereabouts. Plans to exhume a body in El Paraiso, El Salvador, which may be Obregon's failed when the government of El Salvador refused to give permission for the exhumation.

8. The possibility that a Pavon penitentiary prisoner might be able to identify the murderers of Ambassador Mein disappeared when it developed that the man was obviously mentally unstable and fabricating his denunciations.

9. Other events of political violence within Guatemala City included a shootout in Zone 8 on July 3. Two youths [redacted] were arrested. Five days later Antonio FLORES [redacted] a businessman, was killed and an associate, perhaps his bodyguard, was wounded as they returned to Flores' home at noontime. According to press reports, the deceased had been a PR member who had given his support to Arana in the recent presidential campaign. Small bombs were placed outside of the homes of Father Jose Maria RUIZ Furlan and Ernesto ZAMORA Ceteno on the night of July 12. "Padre Chemita" has been engaged in a running battle with Church hierarchy, and Zamora is an MLN deputy and officer in the present Congress. Damage was light and there were no injuries. A FAR propaganda bomb exploded in a crowded shopping section of downtown Guatemala City at 6:30 p.m. on July 15 injuring two persons slightly. On the 27th, a student, RODAS Villatoro, was the alleged victim of a kidnapping attempt. [redacted]

10. Outside of Guatemala City violence continued at a high rate in the San Marcos area, though it seemed to have decreased a bit as the month wore on and the army made its presence felt. On the evening of July 14, ten masked men seized five campesinos from their homes, drove 70 kilometers and then

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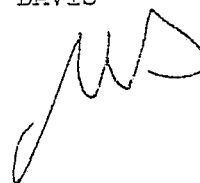
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assassinated four of them on a bridge not far from the scene of the alleged Coatepeque railroad sabotage. One of the five was left for dead but managed to survive and tell the grisly tale. On the same day two other men were killed in Pajapita, San Marcos. On the 27th, two more murders were reported in the Department. Bodies continued to appear in the Tiquisate region of Escuintla though in less profuse numbers. On the 12th, Jose Guillermo RODAS Lazzaro, the owner of a gas station in Escuintla, was shot by two men who entered his garage, locked up his employees and assassinated him. There was no robbery involved.

COMMENT: The government's activities in the field of internal security during its first month in office are encouraging. The new leadership in the security forces, the army's increased activity, the realistic statements by Arenales, the reportedly forced departure of Castaneda, all indicate a sincere attempt to meet the problem of violence in an aggressive, legalistic manner. The fact remains, however, that Arana has yet to be tested by the extreme left. For reasons still unknown, the guerrillas have chosen not to confront the new government. Nevertheless, it still must be assumed that the test will come; that spectacular acts of urban terrorism will be carried out again. Whether the current lull and its attendant sprucing up of the police and army will have given the new government enough time and new tools to be more effective in combatting urban terrorism than the previous government is the nagging question that only time and events can answer.

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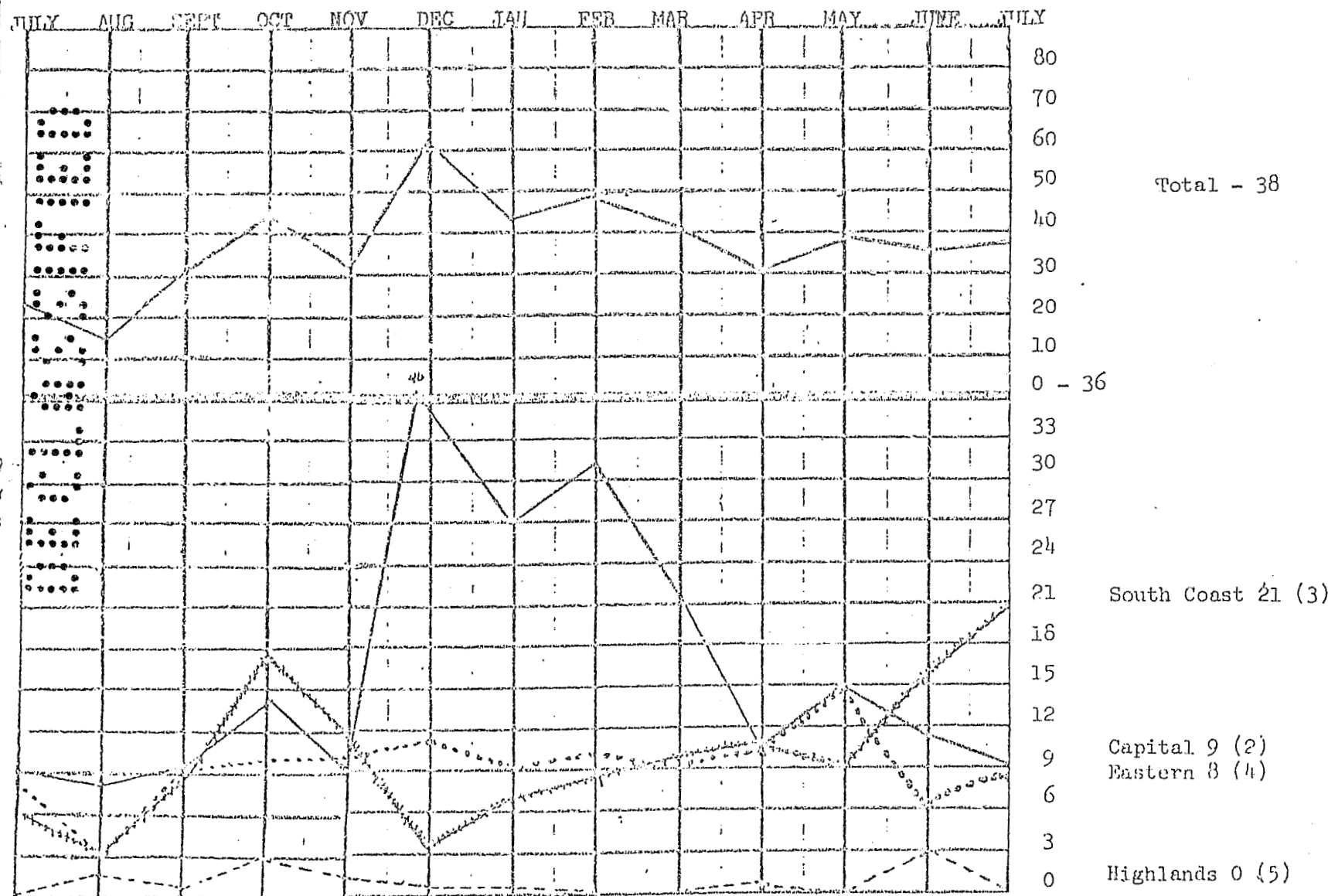


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MONTHLY FREQUENCY OF TERRORIST RELATED INCIDENTS BY REGION (1) JULY 1969 - JULY 1970



1. For purposes of this graph, acts of violence include shootings, bombings, and assassinated bodies
 2. Capital Area: Sacatepequez, Guatemala
 3. South Coast: San Marcos, Quezaltenango, Retalhuleu, Suchitepequez, Escuintla, Santa Rosa
 4. Eastern Region: Jutiapa, El Progreso, Jalapa, Zacapa, Chiquimula, Izabal
- Chimaltenango, Huehuetenango, El Quiche, Baja Verapaz, Solola